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U. S. D.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, January 28, 1937

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Menus for Slim Pocketbooks." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Leaflet available: "Rompers."

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Yesterday, you remember, we didn't have time to finish talking about meals for the children when pocketbooks are thin and food is scarce. I was all ready with the low-cost menus for the children when the time was up and I had to stop.

Nothing like that is going to happen today, if I can help it. I'm here again with those menus and I mean to give them to you before I start on any other subject.

This matter of feeding the family, of serving the right food three times a day, to husbands and children and may be grandmother and grandfather besides---well, that's a job at any time. But when it's necessary to be very economical about the meals, to make a little money go a long way, then it's a problem. The meals have to be low in cost, yet they must be adequate for the needs of growing bodies. And they must be so well prepared that every scrap will be eaten and none will go to waste and so that appetites will always be good. Yes, and they have to be adaptable too, planned so that they will suit the man of the family as well as the small sons and daughters. The new bulletin on food for children says that the motto for every busy mother should be: "One Menu for All." Whole-some simple foods, simply prepared, will suit all members of the household. The child of four or five won't of course, eat as much as his father or his fifteen-year-old brother, but if the meals are well planned, he will be served the very same foods generally. Careful planning will make one menu do for everybody.

Pencils ready, if you please, and I'll give you a day's low-cost meals planned especially with children in mind.

For breakfast: Cooked whole-grain cereal--oatmeal is a good old stand-by. So is cracked whole wheat. Then, toast, of course. And milk for the children to drink and coffee for the grown-ups. I didn't mention fruit, did I? On the very low-cost menus, only the children can have fruit for breakfast, either tomato juice or orange juice. The children need the vitamins and minerals for growth and good healthy tomato juice is often cheaper than orange juice.

Now the noon meal. In a household where there are children, it's wise to serve the dinner at noon, if possible, since children should have their largest

meal in the middle of the day. For noon dinner, then, the main dish will be liver and onions. Beef liver and pig's liver, you know, are less expensive than calves' liver, but excellent if properly prepared. With the liver and onions serve mashed potatoes; bread and butter; and baked apple for dessert.

Supper at night. The hot dish will be milk vegetable soup. (I'll give you the recipe for that in about two minutes.) With the soup you might serve crisp toast. Or, better, sandwiches made with a filling of grated raw carrot. If you have never tried a raw vegetable sandwich, you'll be surprised how good a concoction it is. Just be sure that the vegetable is chopped or grated fine and is seasoned with a little salt, or possibly with mayonnaise. For, for dessert, we'll have rice pudding with raisins.

As I said, these three meals are planned for emergency times when food money is scarce. Only simple and inexpensive foods are featured. But you'll notice that the essentials are there. The child will get his daily milk quota on that menu, also the vegetables he needs, liver for body-building and for red blood, and cereal, bread, rice and so on for energy.

This is just one illustration of how an adequate menu may be supplied to the family, even on a very slim pocketbook. Of course, if you have more to spend on food, more variety or more expensive foods may be served.

But even on low-cost rations it's possible to have considerable variety. Just to prove it, let me outline a possible second day's menu, also planned for economy and with the children in mind.

Breakfast will be about the same. Tomato juice or orange juice again for the children. Then cooked cereal: Toast; milk for the children to drink and coffee for the adults.

For dinner at noon, let's have that good, old-fashioned dish--meat stew with vegetables. A stew is practically a meal in itself any time, if it is served with bread and butter. All you need now is some fruit to top the dinner off with. Stewed dried apricots will be just the thing.

Then for supper, the main dish will be spaghetti and tomatoes. For the young children, raw chopped cabbage--possibly served in sandwiches. And cabbage salad for everyone else. Dessert? Raisin cup cakes.

Did you notice how dried fruits were featured in these food plans for both days? Dried fruits, as I think I mentioned yesterday, are some of the best bargains to be had in the sweet line. Then you buy prunes, apricots, raisins, and so on, you buy not only flavor and sweetness at low cost but also valuable minerals, particularly iron.

Another point about those menus. Did you notice that the vegetables featured are the inexpensive ones which are also high in vitamins and minerals--vegetables like cabbage, tomatoes, carrots, onions and spinach.

There now, I do believe I've said my say on menu. Oh, no. I forgot to talk about the soup, the milk vegetable soup. There's a good item for a cold cat. And an excellent way of serving milk and vegetables combined for the children. It's very easy to make, too. Yes, Arabella, I'll be delighted to give you the recipe now. You'll need seven ingredients.



2 tablespoons of finely chopped turnip
2 tablespoons of finely chopped carrots
2 tablespoons of finely chopped onion
2 tablespoons of melted butter or other fat
1 tablespoon of flour
1 quart of milk, and
1 and 1/2 teaspoons of salt.
I'll repeat that list. (Repeat.)

Now first thing, cook those finely chopped vegetables--the turnip, the carrot, and the onion--in a saucepan in the hot fat for 10 minutes. Next add the flour and stir until all are well blended. In the meantime, heat the milk in the double boiler, add a little of it to the vegetable mixture, and stir well. Then combine this mixture with the rest of the milk, add the salt and cook for 10 minutes. The flavor is improved if the soup stands for a short time to blend before serving. Reheat it and serve.

I have just a little time left for another question. Here's one that several people have asked. "What foods are acid forming, and what are base forming in the body?"

Strange as it may seem, most of the foods that taste acid when we eat them leave an alkaline or base residue when they are digested and used by the body. The reason is that most fruit and vegetable acids are burned up or oxidized, and the minerals left are alkaline substances. Milk is an alkaline forming food, also. Meat, eggs, fish, and to some extent cereals, form an acid substance when used by the body. This is one of the many reasons that in balancing the diet we combine with egg, meat, or fish a good variety of fruits and vegetables and some milk. As a matter of fact, if you are combining plenty of fruits and vegetables with your protein foods, you need not worry at all about this matter of acid and base forming elements, unless you or some member of your family has some special disturbance of his digestive system. In that case, you should seek the advice of a competent physician and not try to diagnose the trouble yourself. We are glad to send our bulletins that give you suggestions for selecting food for the family to maintain good nutrition and good health, but special diets to meet the needs of the body under any unusual or abnormal condition should be prescribed by a doctor.

Friday: "An Oyster Meal for a Chilly Day."

